

## **David Lloyd Flanagan**

By himself

David Lloyd Flanagan, son of Alfred Jay Flanagan and Alice Frances Baldwin, was born June 5, 1931, in Hoffman, Richmond County, NC. He married Ruth Anna Taylor May 20, 1956. He and Ruth had four children, David Russell Flanagan, Eric Shea Flanagan, Bonnie Glenn Flanagan, and Heather Lynn Flanagan. David went through the seventh grade in public schools in Rockingham, Richmond County, NC; the eighth and ninth grades in public school in Mount Vernon, New York; and completed high school in 1948 at Edward Military Institute in Salemburg, NC.

After a summer job in New York, he returned to Rockingham and took a job at a local textile mill. Two years later, at the onset of the Korean War, he joined the Air Force for a four year tour. He went through aircraft and engine mechanics school, B-36 school, and aircraft electrical schools. He received a discharge late in August in 1954 in Spokane. He drove across country and registered at East Carolina College in Greenville, NC, only a few days after the beginning of the school year. ECU was chosen because it started later. His goal was to study electrical engineering as a hobby. He planned to make a living building houses on the NC coast.

The next summer several things occurred. He returned to Rockingham and worked as a carpenter during the day and read books on construction in the evening. He found the work much harder than ever imagined. Also, he and Ruth, the girl whom he met in an otherwise very boring history class had become more than good friends and planned to get married. Maybe earning a living as an electrical engineer wasn't a bad idea.

The following school year found a very willing student at the doors of N.C. State. There was one small problem. He had not taken math at ECU. I hate to call these the old days, but signing up for multiple math classes did not seem to be a problem, even if one was a prerequisite for the next. Anyway, he had a whole weekend to learn the first semester of trig. The first test came in about a week, and several days later the graded papers were handed back without comment at the end of a class. Disaster! A 67! Things looked better after the class scolding at the beginning of the next session. The 67 was the highest grade in the class. It got better after that.

He found physics and mathematics to be much more interesting than electrical engineering and earned a BS in Engineering Physics, an MS in Applied Mathematics, and took additional math and statistics courses before he decided to leave and go to work.

The first real job was with the mathematical analysis staff at Boeing Aerospace in Seattle. Talking about a place where the sun doesn't shine... there is more truth than joke in the saying that summer was on a Wednesday that year. He was in the car with the children when the sun came out. They cheered! Boeing Aerospace had an opening in Huntsville, AL, and he decided it was time to head to the sunny South.